

NBC BRIEFING

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16 October 1947

YUGOSLAV-SOVIET RAPPROCHMENT

- I. When Tito and Khrushchev met in Rumania this summer (1-2 August), Khrushchev seems to have done a real selling job.
 - A. Since then Tito has lined up with the USSR on every major foreign policy issue. He has officially endorsed Oder-Neisse line; supported USSR in UN on Hungary; reacted favorably to a Soviet-inspired proposal for a Balkan conference.
 - B. This week he recognized East Germany.
 1. First non-bloc country to do so.
- II. This trend actually began with the Soviet Presidium changes in June.
 - A. Tito thinks removal of Stalinists opens way for ascendancy of more "liberal" elements led by Khrushchev.
 1. He believes Khrushchev stands for peace and a gradual decrease of Soviet interference in Satellite internal affairs.
 2. In recent Foreign Affairs article, Tito asserted that since death of Stalin, Soviet policy and outlook has really changed, and it is now the West which is menacing the peace.
 3. Tito still ambitious to play a major role in Eastern European and Communist affairs---possible only if he is on good terms with Moscow.
 4. He also probably hopes to obtain more Soviet economic aid for internal development programs which West has been unwilling to support.

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B. Tito thinks Khrushchev's victory in June "far from final," and is convinced Yugoslavs must support Khrushchev's policies, lest they be faced with another less desirable regime.

C. Soviet Defense Minister Zhukov's visit (8-16 October) particularly important to Yugoslavs, who consider him to be force for stability and, as such, insurance for Khrushchev's policies--in USSR.

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1. [REDACTED]

2. After military intervention in Hungary, Soviets may feel Zhukov is best man to reassure Tito that USSR in fact does intend gradually to loosen controls in Eastern Europe.

III. There are still elements within Tito's regime, however, that reportedly are not too pleased with his present course.

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A. [REDACTED]

some officials

in the Yugoslav regime fear that the ultimate end for Tito's current policy is complete dependence on the USSR.

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1. [REDACTED]

a small minority of the top Yugoslav leadership feel that Tito was hoodwinked when he promised support for Khrushchev. This group believes Khrushchev has never forgiven Tito for the break with the USSR in 1948 and will use him as long as needed and then crush him.

B. The postponement until next April of the 7th Party Congress--originally scheduled for this November--also strongly hints at differences within the party ranks.

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IV. Conviction of Milovan Djilas for "hostile propaganda" in conjunction with his recent book The New Class may be warning to opposition elements to keep criticism within bounds. Tito may fear that Djilas' liberal views may become more attractive to the predestinately anti-Soviet Yugoslavs as the Belgrade-Moscow rapprochement develops.

A. Djilas' conviction provides evidence for Tito's associates within the Communist world as well as at home that although Tito may have unorthodox ties with the West, he remains strong defender of communism.

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1. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] some elements in party had opposed trial for fear of hostile Western reaction

B. Djilas' strongest supporter, Vladimir Dedijer and his brother Stefan Dedijer, may also be in trouble.

1. Vladimir, Tito's biographer, although denying it, is alleged by a Vienna newspaper to have publicly supported Djilas and his book.

2. Stefan was fired this month from his post in a laboratory for an article criticizing the lack of intellectual freedom in Yugoslavia.

V. Tito appears convinced that he can carry out a rapprochement with the USSR without endangering his ability to maintain his independence in domestic affairs. He believes that continuing Western aid will enable him to avoid complete dependence on the USSR. However, despite the apparent accord which has developed between Moscow and Belgrade, ideological differences--albeit submerged at the present time--continue and as such remain a potential threat to any lasting rapprochement.